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FM AMEMBASSY BAGHDAD  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2723  
INFO RUCNRAQ/IRAQ COLLECTIVE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BAGHDAD 001048

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 12/31/2019

TAGS: IZ PGOV PREL PINR

SUBJECT: MAYSAN PC SELECTS DA,WA GOVERNOR; SADRISTS SHUT OUT; BAGHDAD DISPLEASED?

Classified By: Deputy Polcouns John G. Fox, reasons 1.4 b/d.

This is a PRT Maysan Reporting Cable

¶1. (C/REL MCFI) Summary: On April 14, Da,wa's State of Law Provincial Council (PC) member Mohammed Shi,a was elected Governor by a Da,wa, ISCI, and National Reform Trend coalition. Outgoing ISCI Deputy Governor Abd al-Hussein Abd al-Rida was elected the new PC Chair. Sadrists, who captured seven PC seats in the January elections, failed to win a single position in the provincial executive leadership. Uncorroborated reports received by the PRT on April 16 indicate that the new Maysani leadership structure was not blessed by Baghdad power brokers, and that national Da,wa and Sadrists Tayar al-Ahrar representatives plan to travel to Amarah for discussions with the PC.

¶2. (C/REL MCFI) Summary continued: The National Reform Trend, the fourth place winner in the elections, received the second deputy governor spot. Mohammed Shi,a's selection as governor was highly anticipated during the long and drawn-out negotiations to identify provincial front-runners and form a governing coalition, and is largely viewed as good news. Mohammed will be well-served by his engineering background and purportedly close ties with Baghdad, which Maysanis hope will improve the provincial government's previously testy relationship with the GOI and bring added financial assistance. End Summary.

Da,wa Wins Governor, Deputy PC Chair

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¶3. (C/REL MCFI) On April 14, the newly-formed Maysan Provincial Council (PC) elected Da,wa State of Law PC member Mohammed Shi,a as the new governor, and outgoing ISCI Deputy Governor Abd al-Hussein Abd al-Rida the new PC Chair. Da,wa party officials informed the PRT that they had formed a governing coalition with ISCI and the National Reform Trend, despite numerous media reports indicating that Da,wa was close to an agreement with the Sadrists. The Sadr-backed Tayar al-Ahrar party, which took seven seats on the PC, failed to win a single position in the provincial executive leadership. National Reform Trend provincial party leader Khalid al-Wahid Kabyan, who was elected Second Deputy Governor, told the PRT on April 15 that the Sadrists had remained in the meeting but chose to abstain when the PC called for a vote on the leadership. The PC also voted Da,wa State of Law party member Abbas al-Showki as the new Deputy PC Chair, while ISCI member Muhammed Hussein Ali Kanbar received the nod to become the First Deputy Governor.

¶4. (U) Final Results

Governor: Muhammed Shi,a ) Da,wa State of the Law  
First Deputy Governor: Muhammed Hussein Ali Kanbar ) ISCI  
Second Deputy Governor: Khalid Abd al-Wahid Kabyan )  
National Reform Trend

PC Chair: Abd al-Hussein Abd al-Rida ) ISCI  
Deputy PC Chair: Abbas al-Showki ) Da,wa State of the Law

Potential Baghdad Intervention?

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¶ 15. (C/REL MCFI) On April 16, local IQATF representative told the PRT that local sources in Amarah, allegedly including the son of an unnamed PC member, had reported that the announcement of Maysan's new Governorate executive leadership, not cleared by national party leaders, had been poorly received in Baghdad. These uncorroborated reports held that national Da'wa and Sadrists Tayar al-Ahrar representatives would soon make the journey to Amarah to investigate and, possibly, intervene.

Comment - What About the Sadrists?

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¶ 16. (C/REL MCFI) Throughout the negotiations, provincial party officials remained tight-lipped about the status of talks, Qofficials remained tight-lipped about the status of talks, giving only small indications that various alliances were being explored with no apparent solution in sight. Da'wa appears to be taking a calculated risk in not allying itself with the Sadrists, given the popular support Sadr still enjoys throughout the province. Da'wa provincial leaders will have to move quickly to address pressing needs in Maysan, including improving the delivery of essential services, or risk the wrath of disenchanted Maysanis when the national elections roll around later this year.

¶ 17. (C/REL MCFI) While reports of potential intervention from Baghdad have not been verified, they indicate the anxiety on the street from news of the exclusion of the Sadrists from

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key leadership posts in this previously Sadrist-led province.

If the announced selections stand, Maysan's Sadrists may well lose motivation to fight their battles chiefly in the political arena, and the possibility of an uptick in violence and a deterioration of security in Maysan will increase. End comment.

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